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ABSTRACT

The University of Northern Colorado's faculty advising model is described. Committees on advising and student retention identified the need for advising data and inservice training for advisers, along with coordination of academic advising services and a reward system for faculty advisers. Each undergraduate is assigned to an academic adviser, and an advising folder for each student is created. A questionnaire administered to 357 students in 1982 to assess student needs and perceptions of the advising process indicated that a majority of advisers were keeping regularly scheduled hours and were giving students adequate time for advising. However, students were not as positive about the advisers's ability to provide information about careers or opportunities such as internships or scholarships. Advising was established as one of three major criteria of a new performance, merit-pay evaluation system for faculty. The evaluations may be based on student, peer, or supervisory evaluations of the faculty member's advising and supervision of students. The evaluation component required faculty to present a dossier containing documentation of accomplishment during the evaluation period. The criteria for evaluating faculty as satisfactory or exceptional advisers are identified. A sample evaluation form is included. (SW)

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RECOGNITION AND REWARD OF FACULTY ADVISORS

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Recognition and Reward for Faculty Advisors

Importance of Academic Advising

For some time now, academic advising has been recognized as an important function for the retention and enrichment of college students. Quality academic advising aids in life and career goal clarification as well as the more short-term goals of course selection and problem solving. Thomas J. Grites described academic advising as a "decision-making process during which students realize their maximum educational potential through communication and information exchanges with an advisor...the advisor serves as a facilitator of communication, a coordinator of learning experiences, and a referral agent".[1] Grites also suggested that with declining enrollments, the academic advisor would play an even more important role in institutions of higher education.

During the 1970's, many institutions have concentrated on the improvement of academic advising as a means of increasing the retention of students. Lee Noel and Phillip Beal compiled information from approximately 1,000 institutions for the American College Testing Program and found that efforts to improve academic advising was the number one retention effort in these institutions.[2] A national survey conducted in 1979 by the American College Testing Program and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems found that inadequate academic advising was seen as a negative campus characteristics.[3] Table I.a illustrates that inadequate academic advising was seen as the most important negative campus characteristic, while Table I.b illustrates the positive as well as negative implications resulting from academic advising services.

Thus, many colleges and universities throughout the country are experiencing a renewed interest in academic advising for the following reasons:

1. A concern for individual student growth and development
2. An interest in increasing student retention
3. Greater student choice of curriculum
4. An increase in non-traditional students
5. A growing concern by students in vocational goals
6. A more developmental view of academic advising as a teaching process

Table 1.a: Negative Campus Characteristics

Negative Characteristic	n=255 2-year Public	n=52 2-year Private	n=201 4-year Public	n=350 4-Year Private	Total
Inadequate academic advising	2.87	2.33	3.61	2.90	3.01
Inadequate curricular offerings	2.65	2.56	2.90	2.93	2.80
Conflict between class/job	3.78	2.12	2.86	2.08	2.77
Inadequate financial aid	2.40	2.50	2.64	2.91	2.66
Inadequate counseling support system	2.53	2.29	2.76	2.56	2.58
Inadequate extra-curricular programs	2.47	2.86	2.31	2.78	2.58
Inadequate academic support services	2.40	2.10	2.80	2.52	2.52

Note: These are the top 6 of 17 negative responses. Figures are average ratings given by respondents on a scale of 1(low) to 5(high).

Table 1.b: Most Important Factors Influencing Student Retention (in rank order)

Campus Characteristic	Average Rating
Negative:	
Inadequate academic advising	3.01
Inadequate curricular offerings	2.80
Conflict between class/job	2.77
Inadequate financial aid	2.66
Inadequate counseling support system	2.58
Inadequate extracurrciular offerings	2.58
Positive	
Caring attitude of faculty and staff	4.28
High quality of teaching	3.91
Adequate financial aid	3.66
Student involvement in campus life	3.30
High quality of advising	3.23

Note: Figures are average ratings based on 1(low) to 5 (high)

The Faculty Advisor

While there appears to be consensus among the higher education community that academic advising is an important if not essential activity, debate still goes on as the the proper delivery system. The traditional emphasis has been on the role of the faculty as advisor. Borland[4], Hollber[5], Shapard[6] and others have stressed the importance of a coordinated faculty advising process. Pascarella pointed out that, in comparing persistant students with non-persisting students, informal contact with faculty appeared to be a major factor which influenced persistance or retention of students.[7] There is considerable support, then, for the notion that the faculty advisor can play the part of a "significant other" who helps "bind" the student to the campus environment.

Yet other observers of the advising process have questioned the emphasis on the faculty advisor. Pino conducted a comprehensive survey of advising procedures at 102 colleges and universities and discovered that over 80% reported the establishment of an advising or student resource type center, the majority of which had been established since 1972.[8] There is evidence that students may be more satisfied with peer advisors, even though there is no evidence that peer advisors provide more student success outcomes than do faculty advisors.[9] On the other hand, Glennen conducted a study which showed greater gains in grades by students who were advised by released time faculty in a centralized advising center than those who were advised in the traditional manner.[10] The concern with the faculty member as advisor centers on the issue of lack of advisor training, increased pressures on the faculty member's time (particularly in the area of increased class loads, research demands and university service requirements), and the lack of a reward system for faculty advising. The effective use of the faculty member as advisor can only be accomplished if these concerns are met. Grites has suggested that the following must be accomplished if advising is to achieve the potential and status that most institutions now desire:[11]

1. The institution must clearly state advising objectives and goals
2. Institutional resources must be well managed to accomplish these goals
3. A reward structure must be put in place for quality advising

The remainder of this paper will describe the efforts of one institution to accomplish these criteria and to promote the faculty advisor model. Special attention will be given to the establishment of a reward system.

The UNC Model

The University of Northern Colorado, a public four-year institution of approximately 10,000 students, has experienced both the effects of declining enrollment and a renewed interest in student retention. Several university committees studied the issue of student retention and concluded that academic advising would play a major role. Recommendations from several studies which were conducted by the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Advising and a University Retention Committee emphasized these common themes:

1. Need for advising data
2. Need for in-service training for advisors
3. Coordination of academic advising services
4. A reward system for faculty advisors

Reports from these committees also noted that UNC faculty preferred to be involved as faculty advisors themselves rather than have a centralized advising system. However, surveys of the faculty indicated that they perceived the lack of a reward system to be a major obstacle in reaching the objective of a good faculty advising system.

While individual departments, schools and colleges at the University of Northern Colorado had developed procedures for academic advising, there had been little coordination of these procedures on a university-wide basis. Shared student data had been limited, advisor training had been sporadic and advising functions were often equated with scheduling courses rather than a comprehensive planning process involved with students' academic and career goals. In order to facilitate the coordination of these advising systems, an Advising Coordinator was appointed by each of the academic deans and the Dean of Students, who had responsibility for undeclared majors. These coordinators were appointed to serve on a Council of Advising Coordinators, chaired by the Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who also serves as the Director of Academic Advising Services.

One of the first steps taken by the University was to assign each undergraduate student to an academic advisor. Declared majors were assigned within their academic areas and undeclared students were advised by staff in the Dean of Students office. An advising folder was created for each student and sent to the student's advisor. The folder contained important information

about the student and was to be updated quarterly and as new information became available. Examples of the content of the advising folder are found in Figure A.

In order to assess student needs and perceptions of the advising process, a questionnaire on academic advising was administered to 357 students in Spring, 1982. The students were enrolled in PSCI 100, a general education course which is usually fairly representative of the student population at the University. The breakdown of students by characteristics is shown in Table 2:a. Most of the students had been assigned to an advisor for at least two quarters (66.6%) and had a grade point average over 2.0 (41.7%) or over 3.0 (45.7%). While 17.6% said they had not been assigned an advisor, most students said they obtained their advising from an assigned faculty person in their department (37.5%) or another faculty in their department (17.4%). The majority of students received advising once a quarter (44%) with a small number stating that they never received advising (14.3%). One note of concern which was immediately encountered was the fact that freshmen tended to answer "never" much more frequently than other students, and to indicate that they had not been assigned an advisor. The necessity of making sure freshmen are notified about who their advisor was and were gotten into the "advising pipeline" was obvious.

Students were asked to evaluate the availability, information giving skills and the overall quality of their advisors, as illustrated in Table 2:b. The results of this survey indicated that the majority of advisors were keeping regularly scheduled hours and were giving students adequate time for advising. However, students were not as positive about the advisor's ability to give information about careers or opportunities such as internships or scholarships. It was also evident that very few departments had a policy of contacting students who were experiencing academic problems.

Table 2:a. Student Characteristics

Gender		Class Standing	
male	26.6%	Freshman	32.2%
female	63.9%	Sophomore	20.2%
		Junior	16.2%
		Senior	22.7%

FIGURE A

CONTENTS OF ADVISING FOLDER

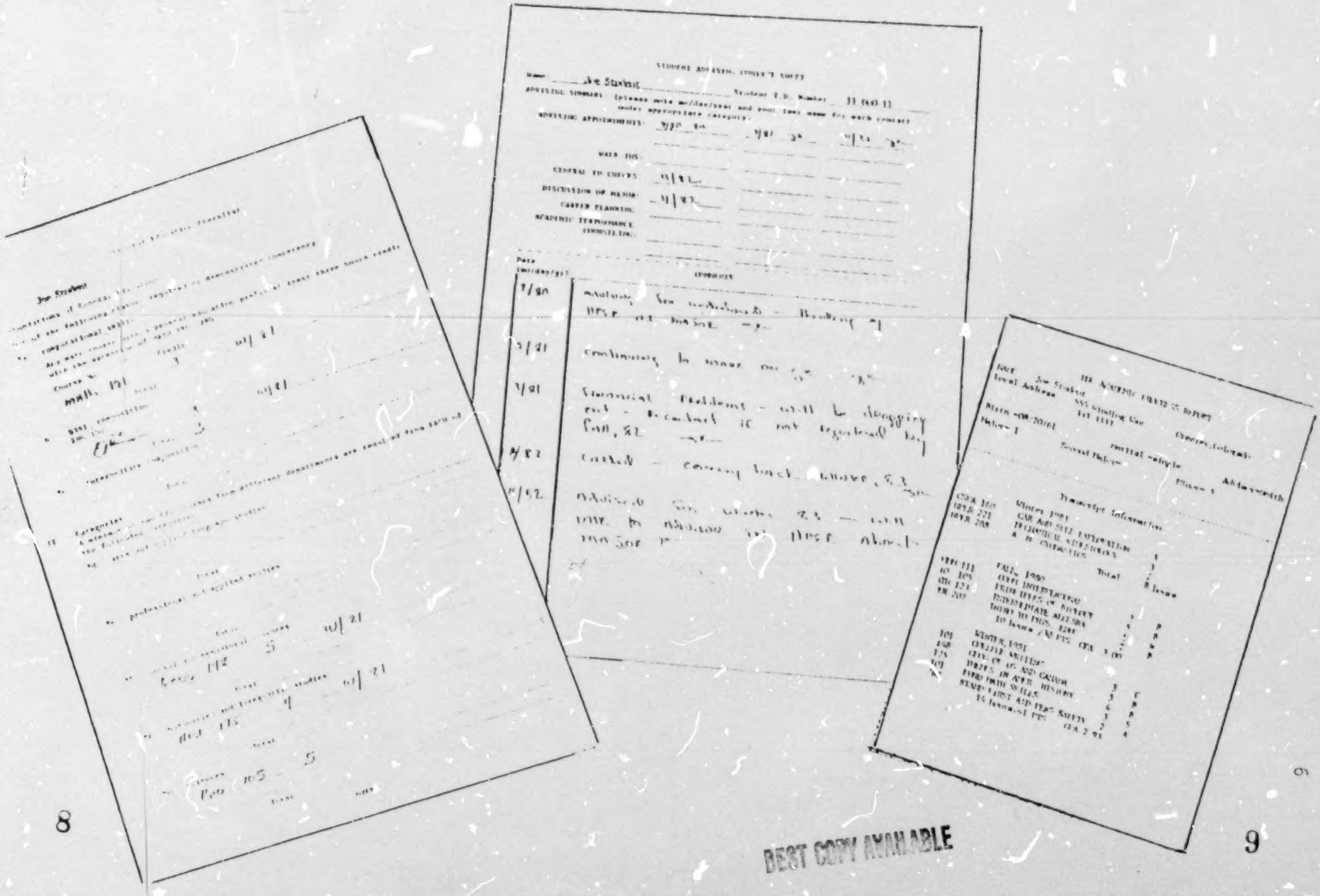

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Table 2:b. Percent of Students Having Advisor Who Performs Following Tasks

	YES
MY ADVISOR HAS REGULARLY SCHEDULED OFFICE HOURS	61.1 %
I CAN EASILY OBTAIN HELP PRIOR TO REGISTRATION	57.7 %
MY ADVISOR SPENDS AS MUCH TIME WITH ME AS I NEED	54.6 %
MY ADVISOR KNOWS DATES FOR DEADLINES, DROP/ADD, etc.	48.5 %
MY ADVISOR HAS REFERRED ME TO RESOURCES/SERVICES ON CAMPUS	38.9 %
MY ADVISOR HAS INFORMED ME ABOUT CAREER POSSIBILITIES	33.6 %
I HAVE HAD GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS EXPLAINED BY MY ADVISOR	35.5 %
MY ADVISOR HAS CONTACTED ME ABOUT MY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	10.9 %
I HAVE HAD MAJOR REQUIREMENTS EXPLAINED BY MY ADVISOR	49.3 %
I BELIEVE MY ADVISOR CARES ABOUT ME AS A PERSON	47.1 %
MY ADVISOR MAKES ME AWARE OF OPPORTUNITIES SUCH AS NEW CLASSES, SCHOLARSHIPS, INTERNSHIPS, etc.	23.5 %

Table 2:c. Percent of Students Never Receiving Advising

Classification	Percent "never"
Freshmen	30.4%
Sophomore	9.7%
Junior	8.6%
Senior	4.9%

Table 2:d. Percent Rating Advisor as "Poor"

Classification	Availability	Information	Overall Quality
Freshmen	21%	22%	31%
Sophomore	12%	35%	29%
Junior	14%	20%	20%
Senior	13%	18%	20%

Rewarding Faculty Advisors

The student surveys discussed above, as well as faculty concerns about the lack of a reward or recognition system for advising activities, led the University of Northern Colorado to include advising as one of the three major criteria of its new performance, merit-pay evaluation system.

Faculty evaluation systems had been discussed at UNC for many years. An attempt to institute a faculty evaluation/merit pay system was made in 1973-74 but was abandoned because of faculty criticisms. The 1983-74 performance evaluation rewarded longevity although it did not contain a provision for merit. While abandoning this effort, the Faculty Salary Audit Committee and the Board of Trustees complained that "across-the-board" percentage increases failed to recognize quality and market conditions in higher education. In March of 1982, the Board of Trustees unanimously adopted a proposal for merit pay, and the Faculty Senate established a joint administrative-faculty committee to develop and recommend a new faculty salary model. By summer of 1983, a number of school and college faculty committees had begun work on performance evaluation systems. A document was created and approved in March, 1984.

Three performance areas were identified: (1) Teaching/Advising, (2)Professional Achievement and (3) Service. Faculty were to be placed in one of four levels, based on the individual's performance during the academic year. The levels were identified as follows:[12]

1. Unsatisfactory: The individual fails to meet the Minimum Standards in the Instruction Area.
2. Needs Improvement: The Individual meets the Minimum Standards in the Instruction area and fails to meet the Mimimum Standards in at least one of the two remaining performance areas.
3. Meets Expectations: The individual meets the Mimimum Standards in the three performance areas.
4. Exceeds Expectations: The individual achieves the Standards for Excellence in at least two of the three performance areas, and meets at least the Minimum Standard in the third.

Faculty who received a (2) would receive one-half of the salary increases. Faculty who received an overall evaluation of (3) received a full increase, and faculty receiving an overall (4) received full increase plus bonus.

Standards for Evaluation of Advising

The criteria by which faculty were to be evaluated in the advising component of the Instruction Area can be seen in Figure B. Possible measures of outcomes were suggested for each performance area. Those which would impact the evaluation of academic advising activities included:

- Student evaluations
- Peer evaluations
- Administrative evaluations
- Alumni evaluations (follow-up studies)
- Standardized achievement tests
- Pretest/posttest
- Student productivity (e.g., portfolio)
- Effectiveness of graduates in the marketplace
- Comparison with a control group
- Student drop-out rate
- Meritorious recognition
- Office hours held
- Support staff review
- Maintenance of advising records

The evaluation process required the faculty member to present a dossier containing documentation of accomplishment during the evaluation period. The dossier was evaluated by the Chair of the department. After review by the faculty member, the evaluation form was sent to the Dean for review. If the Dean's evaluation differed from that of the Chair, the form was sent to the faculty member for review and signature. A "blind" review of 10% by the Vice President for Academic Affairs was required. The Vice President was also required to review any evaluation which a faculty member requested. An appeal process was also available and a University Advisory Committee was established for that purpose. An example of the Evaluation Form is found in Figure C.

Conclusions

The importance of academic advising will only be fully understood by faculty when those activities are considered along with other professional activities when promotion, tenure, and salary decisions are made. The inclusion of criteria for measuring advising outcomes and performances is essential. While institutional and administrative support for advising is important, it is even more essential that recognition and reward is forthcoming for those who

FIGURE B

STANDARD	LEVEL III	LEVEL IV
Quality of academic advising/student supervision.	A. Satisfactory student, peer, or supervisory evaluations (as defined by the unit) with respect to the advising and supervision of students. (1) Adequate office hours are established and maintained. (2) Consistently provides current, correct information. (3) Provide follow through for both student and referral services when needed. (4) Effective relationships with clients, peers and agency personnel are established and maintained. (5) Collaborative relationships with agencies are developed and maintained. (6) Contractual arrangements and quality of experiences are effectively monitored such that both the student and university benefit. (7) Theses, dissertations, and student reports of high relevance and quality. (8) Placement of students in high quality positions. (9) Quality and rigor of examinations or other competency-based assessments administered as part of degree requirements. (10) Successful completion by advisees of examinations or other assessments (in ratio to failures) in the areas of certification and licensing. (11) Formal recognition of students achievement outside the classroom or instructional impact after student has matriculated. B. Other evidence of satisfactory advising/supervison as agreed to and doucmented by the individual or the unit.	A. Exceptional or very high student, peer, or supervisory evaluations (as defined by the unit) with respect to the advising and supervision of students. (1) Exceptionally high quality competency/comprehensive examination. (2) Distinguished performance of current and former students or examinations prior to and subsequent to matriculation. (3) Accessible to students and provides information beyond academic unit requirements. (4) provides direction to students in the development of professional ethics and standards. (5) Serves as an effective role model to students. (6) New and innovative collaborative relationships with the public and private sector. (7) Collaborative relationships with agencies/ organizations of a state, regional, national or international scope. (8) Exceptionally high quality or distinguished theses, dissertations, and research reports. (9) Placement of students into distinguished occupational positions. (10) Student awards for achievement. B. Other evidence of exceptional or high quality advising/supervision as agreed to and documented by the unit.

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FIGURE C(PAGE 1)

FACULTY EVALUATION FORM - CHAIR'S REVIEW

Faculty Member's Name _____

Title _____

Administrative Unit _____

Evaluation Period From _____ To _____

I. Instruction and Advising

A. Strengths

B. Weaknesses

C. Suggestions for Improvement

Overall I _____

II. Professional Achievement

A. Strengths

B. Weaknesses

C. Suggestions for Improvement

Overall II _____

III. Service

A. Strengths

B. Weaknesses

C. Suggestions for Improvement

Overall III _____

Chair's Summary:

Based on my rating on the three performance areas and according to the University Evaluation Procedure, the faculty member's performance:

1. (Is) Unsatisfactory _____
2. Needs Improvement _____
3. Meets Expectations_____
4. Exceeds Expectations _____

Comments (include description of sources of information that were used in addition to the faculty vitae, if any):

Chair's Signature _____ Date _____

Member's Summary. (The faculty member will be given adequate time to examine the evaluation form and to present written comments.)

_____ I agree with the Chair's assessment.

_____ I disagree with the Chair's assessment.

_____ I have read the evaluation.

Comments: (Optional)

Faculty Member's Signature _____ Date _____

Dean's Summary:

_____ I agree with the Chair's assessment.

_____ I disagree with the Chair's assessment. I evaluate the faculty member at Level _____.

Comments: (required if evaluation is changed)

Dean's Signature _____ Date _____

Vice President's Summary

_____ I agree with the Dean's assessment.

_____ I disagree with the Dean's assessment. I evaluate the faculty member at Level _____.

Comments: (required if evaluation is changed)

Vice President's Signature _____ Date _____

demonstrate qualitative results. The performance evaluation document of the University of Northern Colorado is one attempt to achieve this goal.

Footnotes

[1]Thomas J. Grites. Academic Advising: Getting Us Through the 80's. American Association for Higher Education, 1979.

[2]P.E. Beal and L. Noel, What Works in Student Retention. The American College Testing Program and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 1979.

[3]Ibid.

[4]D.T. Borland, "Curricular Planning Through Creative Academic Advising", NASPA Journal,v.10 (1973), 211-217.

[5]E.C. Hollberg, "Realism in Academic Advising". Journal of College Personnel, v.6 (1964), 114-117.

[6]E.L. Shapard, "Specialization in Faculty Advising", Journal of College Personnel, v.15 (1974), 514-515.

[7]E.T. Pascarella and P.T. Terenzini, "Patterns of Student-Faculty Informal Interaction beyond the Classroom", Journal of Higher Education v.48 (September/October 1977), 540-552.

[8]A.J. Pino, "The Organization, Structure, Functions and Student Perceptions of Effectiveness of Undergraduate Academic Advising Center", Dissertation Abstracts Internation, v. 35 (1975).

[9]Joe B. Sheldon, "A Comparison of Faculty Academic Advising and Academic Advising by Professional Counselors", Final Report (Washington, D.C.: Office Of Education, Bureau of Research) February,1972.

[10]Robert E. Glennen, "Intrusive College Counseling", College Student Journal, v.9 (Feb-March 1975), 2-4.

[11]Grites, op. cit.

[12]Performance Evaluation Draft, University of Northern Colorado, 1984.